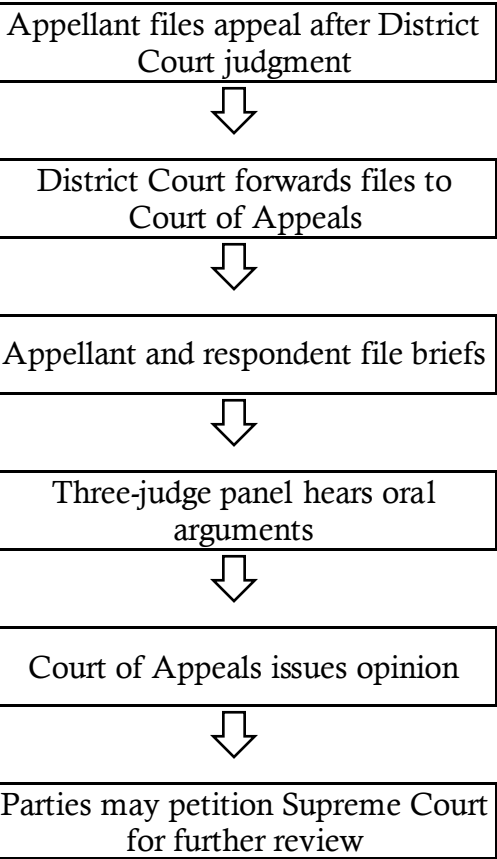


HOW DOES A CASE  
GET TO THE COURT  
OF APPEALS?



Minnesota  
Court of Appeals

Minnesota Judicial Center  
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-297-1000  
Hours 8 a.m.—5 p.m. Monday—Friday  
[www.mncourts.gov](http://www.mncourts.gov)

Visitor's  
Guide to Oral  
Arguments

Minnesota  
Court of  
Appeals



Welcome to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, the state's intermediate appellate court. You are about to hear oral arguments in an appeal. The 19-judge Court of Appeals hears an appeal in a three-judge panel at which no new evidence or testimony are offered. Instead, the Court reviews the decisions and procedures of the lower court or agency and decides whether an error occurred.

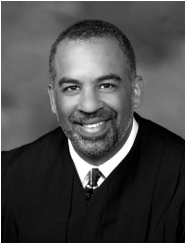
Minnesota  
Court of Appeals



Chief Judge  
Susan Segal



Judge Renee  
Worke



Judge Kevin  
Ross



Judge Francis  
Connolly



Judge  
Matthew  
Johnson



Judge Michelle  
Larkin



Judge Louise  
Dove  
Bjorkman



Judge Denise  
Reilly



Judge Peter  
Reyes, Jr.



Judge Lucinda  
Jesson



Judge Tracy  
Smith



Judge Diane  
Bratvold



Judge Jeanne  
Cochran



Judge Randall  
Slieter



Judge Jeffrey  
Bryan



Judge Jennifer  
Frisch



Judge  
Theodora  
Gaitas



Judge  
Sarah  
Wheelock



Judge  
Elise  
Larson

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## What happens during oral arguments?

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- **Marshal calls court to order; audience stands.** During oral arguments, the marshal maintains courtroom decorum and ensures that attorneys adhere to time limitations.
- **Three judges enter the courtroom.** Court of Appeals cases are heard in three-judge panels. Prior to oral arguments, judges prepare by reading “briefs,” or written arguments submitted by the parties involved. The judges sit in order of seniority, with the presiding judge in the middle.
- **Appellant’s attorney argues the case.** The attorney representing the appealing party also answers judges’ questions about his/her legal argument. Fifteen minutes are allotted with five minutes for rebuttal.
- **Respondent’s attorney argues and answers judges’ questions.** Fifteen minutes are allotted.
- **Judges conference the case.** One judge is

assigned to draft the Court’s “opinion” or decision, which is discussed during conference.

- **Judges draft and revise the opinion.** The draft is circulated among the members of the three-judge panel. A judge on the panel may also write a “concurring opinion” – agreeing with the decision but for different reasons – or a “dissenting opinion” – disagreeing with the majority opinion. Once the judges agree on a final draft, the opinion is circulated to the entire Court of Appeals for comments.
- **Opinion filed with Clerk of Appellate Courts, released to public via the Judicial Branch web site [www.mncourts.gov](http://www.mncourts.gov).** The Court of Appeals releases its opinion within 90 days.



Minnesota Judicial Center, St. Paul

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## Courtroom decorum

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**Please help us maintain decorum.** Important issues are decided based on oral arguments. Therefore, it is critical that the judges and attorneys work without distraction.

Please abide by the following while in court:

- Sit in the audience area of the courtroom. Standing is prohibited during oral arguments.
- Remain silent during the proceedings.
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum, or use tobacco in the courtroom.
- Remove hats before entering the courtroom.
- No demonstrations are allowed, including signs, banners or displays of symbols.
- Electronic recording devices are prohibited, except as permitted for the media.
- Turn off cell phones before entering the courtroom.
- Any distracting activity will be grounds for removal from the courtroom.

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## HOW MANY CASES DOES THE COURT OF APPEALS HANDLE?

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More than 2,000 appeals a year from:

- District Court decisions (except first-degree murder).
- Administrative agencies (except Tax and Workers’ Compensation courts).

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## WHEN DO ORAL ARGUMENTS OCCUR?

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- Year-round in courtrooms 100 and 200 in the Minnesota Judicial Center, St. Paul.
- At various Greater Minnesota locations to keep litigation costs low and to ensure access to justice.